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14. ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a new look at deterrence for strategic planners interested in the application of deterrence against violent extremist organizations, namely the Islamic State. After a literature review, two strategies add depth to understanding the application of deterrence against VEOs. The Israeli IDF Strategy provides a relevant situation where deterrence is a main pillar of its strategy. In contrast to Israel, the U.S. strategy to counter the Islamic State lacks an operationalized deterrence approach and does not alter the Islamic State's risk calculus. In conclusion, the analysis highlights adding deterrence to the strategy against the Islamic State.

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JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL

ADD DETERRENCE TO THE STRATEGY AGAINST ISIS

by

LTC Jon-Paul Maddaloni, U.S. Army

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Add Deterrence to the Strategy Against ISIS

By

Jon-Paul Maddaloni

LTC, U.S. Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes. (or appropriate statement per the Academic Integrity Policy)

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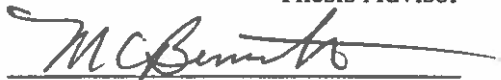Jon-Paul Maddaloni, LTC
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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a new look at deterrence for strategic planners interested in the application of deterrence against violent extremist organizations (VEOs), namely the Islamic State (ISIS). Beginning with a literature review of deterrence theory, several classic and contemporary deterrence scholars add to understanding deterrence as a coercive strategy against state and non-state actors. Deterrence is defined as the exploitation of potential force in a bargain called the diplomacy of violence to coerce an adversary to avoid certain courses of action. For deterrence to successfully be applied to strategy, careful consideration on key attributes and prerequisites is recommended. Analysis of deterrence theory concludes with three approaches to operationalizing deterrence as a tool for planners: See My Strength, Can We Talk, and Feel the Burn.

Additionally, evaluation of two strategies add depth to understanding the application of deterrence against VEOs. The Israeli IDF Strategy provides a relevant situation where deterrence is a main pillar of its strategy. Israel's restrictive use of general and specific deterrence enables its establishment of rules of the game to lessen the political violence to acceptable levels and create a situation where they maintain the position of advantage in the region. In contrast to Israel, the U.S. strategy to counter ISIS lacks an operationalized deterrence approach and does not alter ISIS's risk calculus. In conclusion, the analysis highlights adding deterrence to the strategy against ISIS.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The U.S. and the world stands on the proverbial edge of a cliff contemplating the way ahead and strategy for countering violent extremist organizations (VEOs), like the Islamic State (ISIS) and other radical Islamic terrorist organizations.[1] One definition of violent extremism is:

> individuals or groups that commit crimes that may seriously damage a country or an international organization committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population, or unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act, or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or international organization.[2]

The U.S. 2015 National Military Strategy outlines an objective of disrupt, degrade, and defeat ISIS, but nowhere does the strategy mention deterrence of VEO.[3] Similarly, President Donald Trump and former President Barack Obama said publicly that ISIS is among the most brutal and hostile threats facing the U.S. and there can be no accommodation or negotiation with it. Is this an oversight, or do military and political planners believe ISIS and other VEOs cannot be deterred or bargained with? Arguments that VEOs are undeterrable usually presume irrational behavior, non-negotiable positions, and lack of territory or the "dilemma known as the return address problem."[4] Yet recent history suggests terrorist organizations and VEOs cannot be defeated using force alone.

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[1] To alleviate any confusion throughout this thesis, ISIS is used as the name of the radical Sunni Islamic insurgent and terrorist group. Names for this group stem from references to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), or the acronym Da'esh. Additional support for using ISIS is in accordance with Presidential policy. President Trump's Presidential Memorandum Plan to Defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, dated 28 January 2017, utilizes ISIS as the shortened name for the group.

[2] Edwin Bakker and Eelco Kessels, "The OSCE's Efforts to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Comprehensive Approach Addressing Root Causes," *Security and Human Rights* No. 2 (2012), 89.

[3] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America,* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, June 2015), 5.

[4] Alex Wilner, "Contemporary Deterrence Theory and Counterterrorism: A Bridge Too Far?", *International Law and Politics* Vol. 47 (May 2015), 444. VEOs and terrorist organizations often do not have traditional

New thoughts on the subject of deterrence are emerging that may be useful when applied to VEOs. Deterrence is just as relevant today as it was in the past and can be a critical part of the strategy for ISIS's defeat, specifically contemporary deterrence theories of denial, dissuasion, delegitimization, reward, and punishment.

ISIS has a unique identity and strategy. ISIS's attempt at claiming territory and establishing a caliphate shattered the return address dilemma and provided an opportunity for a new look at deterrence as a part of a winning strategy. ISIS's claimed territory in Iraq and Syria places it in a position where it has something to lose, beyond its radical Islamic ideology. Likewise, with ISIS losing much of its territorial gains, it may be in a weakened position to enter into talks or negotiations. This thesis attempts to answer two fundamental questions: can the U.S. create a comprehensive positional advantage (physical, cognitive, moral) against ISIS using contemporary deterrence? and how can deterrence and negotiation lead to ISIS's defeat?

A successful strategy against ISIS needs to look beyond its immediate military defeat and towards the underlying conditions that make its ideology attractive to radicalized Muslims worldwide. Ideologies are not forgotten overnight, if ever. Adding deterrence to the strategy against ISIS establishes the necessary rules of the game to take advantage of ISIS's tactical failures and buy time for the global coalition to positively address underlying conditions that spark radicalization. History shows deterrence does not equal a quick victory, however adding deterrence to the overall strategy to defeat ISIS places the U.S. and its allies in a position of advantage to achieve lasting victory and nurture greater support in the region and around the world against radical Islamic terrorism.

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territorial holdings susceptible to retaliation and punishment, hence the dilemma name "return address problem."

The rest of this thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of deterrence theory with several classic and contemporary deterrence scholars that add to understanding deterrence as a coercive strategy against state and non-state actors. Chapter 3 explores deterrence from a framework based on J.F.C. Fuller's use of force and proposes three approaches as a tool for planners. Chapter 4 reviews Israel's IDF Strategy with analysis of operationalized deterrence. Israel offers a relevant study, given its geographic and political situation where deterrence has real impact. lessons learned. In contrast, chapter 5 reviews the existing U.S. counter ISIS strategy with analysis identifying the lack of deterrence. Finally, chapter 6 provides conclusions and the advantages of adding deterrence to the strategy against ISIS.

CHAPTER 2: DETERRENCE THEORY – LITERATURE REVIEW

Deterrence is the art of producing, in the mind of the enemy, the fear to attack.[1]

Peter Sellers, Dr. Strangelove

The volume of work on deterrence theory is massive and is as old as the study of warfare. At its core is the understanding of the use of force and threat of force. Sun Tzu, in the sixth century B.C., postulated "to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."[2] Sun Tzu placed the enemy's strategy as the decisive point in war. Similarly, Carl von Clausewitz recognized the advantage of great strength and brute force where "there will be no fighting: the weaker side will yield at once."[3] The below comparison perfectly highlights the nuance between use of force and threat of force:

> There is a difference between taking what you want and making someone give it to you, between fending off an assault and making someone assault you, between holding what people are trying to take and making them afraid to take it, between losing what someone can forcibly take and giving it up to avoid risk or damage.[4]

Deterrence is not simply winning without the use of force, there has to be credible force to back up the threat. Sun Tzu and Clausewitz would agree that the art of strategy is applying the precise use of force at the right time to achieve the object of war. The intent of this literature review is to clarify definitions and establish deterrence prerequisites and key attributes.

Thomas Schelling's work on classical deterrence throughout the Cold War set the stage for meaningful debate on deterrence that continues today. Schelling's two major

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[1] *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, directed by Stanley Kubrick, (Columbia Pictures, 1964), scene at 55:09 with Peter Sellers as Dr. Strangelove.
[2] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel Griffith, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77.
[3] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Everyman's Library, 1993), 96.
[4] Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 2.

contributions are *The Strategy of Conflict* and *Arms and Influence*. His definition of deterrence is "concerned with the exploitation of potential force" and "persuading a potential enemy that he should in his own interest avoid certain courses of activity."[5] Schelling contends that deterrence is like a bargain where both sides weigh their options and decide to act, based on the influence of evidence presented. The key to the bargain is ensuring the other side believes the evidence, which is the threat of force and can include all means at the disposal of a nation or non-state actor. Schelling further describes this bargain as the "diplomacy of violence" due to the inherent nature of this type of bargaining being brutal and destructive with the "power to hurt."[6] A critical point of Schelling's bargain is communicating to the adversary the threat of the use of force and the barrier or line that should not be crossed. Open communications or back-door channels, like those used in the Cuban missile crisis, are essential.

Another important concept from Schelling is the difference between deter and compel. He contends that the ability to deter is easier than to compel; the main difference is punishment "if" the enemy acts for deterrence, rather than "until" the enemy acts for compellence.[7] In deterrence, once the initial conditions are set, there is a waiting game where action is only taken if a line is crossed. Deterrence can be thought of as maintaining the status quo. Conversely, compellence involves taking action until the conditions have been reestablished to obtain a desired status quo. Both deterrence and compellence also incur an increased risk of escalation of the situation, or enlargement of the war.[8]

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[5] Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 9.
[6] Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 3.
[7] Ibid, 100.
[8] Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, 199.

Finally, Schelling outlines the problems with deterrence and factors that can lead to a failed strategy of deterrence. Most importantly, deterrence is based on a rational or reasonable actor model, where nations and non-state actors will act or behave according to their best interests and evaluation of benefits versus costs. Most scholars agree that terrorists, even when executing suicide missions, are acting rationally within their value system.[9] The three C's of deterrence outline the potential failures of the theory. First, the threat has to be credible and whoever makes the threat has to have the capability to carry it out. Second, the threat has to be communicated simply and understood completely for the adversary to know the dilemma they face. Third, there must be commitment or promise that the threatened action will be taken. Schelling admits that in an unpredictable and complex world, issues surrounding rationality and the three C's of deterrence can lead to failures and disaster. Rationality and the three C's have led many political science experts and military practitioners to interpret deterrence theory as unpredictable.

For Colin Gray, deterrence is a concept as "ancient as human society" intending to "influence the decisions of others."[10] Gray's major contribution to deterrence is the Strategic Studies Institute paper titled, *Maintaining Effective Deterrence*. He contends that deterrence is needed today more than ever as a counter to the U.S.'s tendency of preemption post 9/11. Gray adds to the discussion by providing useful definitions of not just deterrence, but other key terms:

> Deterrence – has the negative object of persuading an adversary not to take action that it might otherwise have done.

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[9] Terrorists want control and need to get a message out to gain support for their cause. Some terrorists act selflessly for their cause and make decisions based on the greater good of their community, while others stay committed to the group because they will be killed if they defect. Rationality is a base term that does not cover specific nuances of every motivation (value system) a terrorist considers to make a decision. However, most terrorism scholars agree that decisions are made for a reason, and not pure insanity.

[10] Colin Gray, *Maintaining Effective Deterrence*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 1.

Compellence – has the positive object of persuading an adversary at a minimum to cease and desist from current misbehavior, and more likely to retreat from positions seized and to surrender assets illicitly seized by force.
Dissuasion – is similar to deterrence, but persuades the general masses like a message to "those whom they may concern" against future military competition.
Inducement – is a way of influencing with persuasion-by-reward for good behavior.
Preemption and prevention – are alternatives to deterrence, and mean to attack first in the last resort, which is to say in the face of truly compelling evidence of imminent threat. The difference between the two is timing and a preventative attack is initiated before an identified menace becomes an imminent threat and may be based on suspicion rather than compelling evidence.[11]

Gray outlines considerations that enhance the success of deterrence and reasons for its marginalization as a strategy. Some of Gray's advice for successful deterrence are: understanding the culture and value system of the adversary (opposite of a one size fits all approach or strictly American perspective), show the global community that terrorism is a failed strategy, and the importance of landpower strength and flexibility options utilizing the military component of deterrence.[12] Conversely, Gray outlines the failings of deterrence as: the "inherent unreliability; the probable fragility of the theory with which we engaged the Cold War; the continuing confusion of rationality with reasonableness; the likelihood that many among our new enemies will not be deterrable; and, finally, that friction lurks to hinder or frustrate our best efforts to deter."[13]

Similar to Gray, Lawrence Freedman believes deterrence is needed in the post-9/11 world. Freedman establishes that "in all cases [deterrence] is about setting boundaries for actions and establishing the risks associated with the crossing of those boundaries."[14] He

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[11] Gray, 13-16.
[12] Ibid, 28-37.
[13] Ibid, 25.
[14] Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2008), 116.

prescribes that if one considers the behavior of an adversary and means to change the behavior, deterrence will naturally come to light as a part of the strategy. Even for terrorism, Freedman believes that through "stigmatizing their ideas amongst communities" and creating global norms, terrorist acts will have little chance of success in reaching their political outcomes.[15] Freedman is positive that a strategy of containment and norm-setting will add to legitimacy. However, Freedman does not put all his trust in the norms-based approach, and realizes an interest-based approach is also required.[16] The interest-based approach is similar to classic deterrence, where "those who contemplate harming certain well-defined interests should know the consequences."[17]

Zachary Goldman provides a contemporary view of deterrence. Building upon the works of Schelling and Freedman, Goldman defines deterrence as "the act of influencing an adversary's cost/benefit calculations to prevent him from doing something that you do not want him to do."[18] He agrees that the aforementioned three C's of deterrence are critical to a successful strategy, but adds one more with ensuring the adversary has a way out. Goldman states, "to be coercive, violence has to be anticipated and it has to be avoidable by accommodation."[19]

From a broader application of deterrence to counterterrorism and cyberspace, Goldman posits deterrence needs to be examined not simply in the military province, but other instruments of national power. He establishes two additional ways to deter, through denial and delegitimization. Deterrence-by-denial is when an adversary "is deterred from a

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[15] Ibid, 123.
[16] Ibid, 4.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Zachary Goldman, "Navigating Deterrence: Law, Strategy, and Security in the Twenty-First Century," *International Law and Politics* Vol. 47 (May 2015), 311.
[19] Goldman, 314.

course of action when a defender employs measures that make a successful attack less likely [to achieve their objective]."[20] In deterrence-by-delegitimizattion, the adversary's likelihood of achieving their goals are reduced "by attacking the legitimacy of the beliefs that inform his behavior."[21]

Focusing on counterterrorism, Alex Wilner's views on deterrence are the most modern and influential for today's VEOs. Although he breaks down the blurring of deterrence with influence and denial with defense, Wilner's ultimate goal is to move beyond the academic definitions of terms and focus the discussion on outcomes. Similar to Gray's and Freedman's insight on understanding an adversary's culture, Wilner's ultimate goal is to "operationalize" deterrence with complete understanding of the desired outcome.[22] To have effective deterrence of terrorism and VEOs, there has to be selective targeting of groups and sub-groups with the existing structure; Wilner refers to this as "unpacking terrorism."[23] Examples from a cell structure are leaders who proselytize the extreme ideology, planners, recruiters, financiers, state sponsors, bomb-makers, and the fighters who carry out the attacks. The best reason for selective targeting of each group within the cell structure is that they will respond differently to different types of deterrent threats.

From a practical perspective, Wilner illuminates phasing as another approach to unpacking terrorism.[24] All operations have a beginning, middle, and an end; understanding the phases will enable focused efforts against terrorism that can prevent successful transitions to reaching the end. A simple way of thinking of the progression through phases in order are:

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[20] Goldman, 318. Text added in brackets included to align Goldman's definition closer to Glenn Snyder's definition of deterrence-by-denial. From Synder's book, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security*, denial affects the adversary's calculus on the "probability of winning the objective."
[21] Ibid, 318.
[22] Wilner, 441.
[23] Ibid, 447.
[24] Ibid, 447.

radicalization, recruitment, financing, bomb-making, infiltration, execution, and publicity. Successful deterrence needs to be applied differently at each phase of the aforementioned example.

One final thought from Wilner for contemporary deterrence is that removing the ability of a terrorist organization to act is not sufficient and the overall plan must include removing the willingness to act as well. He refers to this as the "distinction between diminishing capability and manipulating motivation."[25] Application of force, including threat of force, needs to be applied in the cognitive and moral spheres to have a comprehensive strategy against terrorism and VEOs.

Figure 1 is a compilation of the key definitions used in this paper. Important to this framework is an understanding that use of force exists in a strategy spectrum from preemptive, coercive, and defensive action. The coercive strategy is further delineated into deterrent and compellent strategies. For any strategy chosen, there may be times when the lines between these actions blur together or include elements of another use or threat of force.

Use of Force Spectrum

Preemptive Strategy	**Coercive Strategy**	**Defensive Strategy**
To attack an adversary first, as a last resort and in the face of truly compelling evidence of imminent threat	Manipulating an adversary's behavior by use of force or threat of use of force	To mitigate the effects of an adversary's attack, maintenance of the status quo

Deterrent Strategy
Persuading an adversary not to take action that it might otherwise have done

Compellent Strategy
Persuading an adversary to take action, can be used to stop current misbehavior or start desired behavior

Unpacking Deterrence

by-Denial – adversary is deterred from a course of action when a defender employs measures that make a successful attack less likely to produce the desired outcome
by-Dissuasion – persuades the general masses like a message to "those whom they may concern" against future military competition
by-Delegitimization – adversary's likelihood of achieving their goals are reduced by norm-setting against the legitimacy of the beliefs that inform his behavior
by-Reward – adversary is influenced to not take action with persuasion for a reward for good behavior
by-Punishment – adversary is deterred from a course of action with the high cost threat to destroy his capability or existence
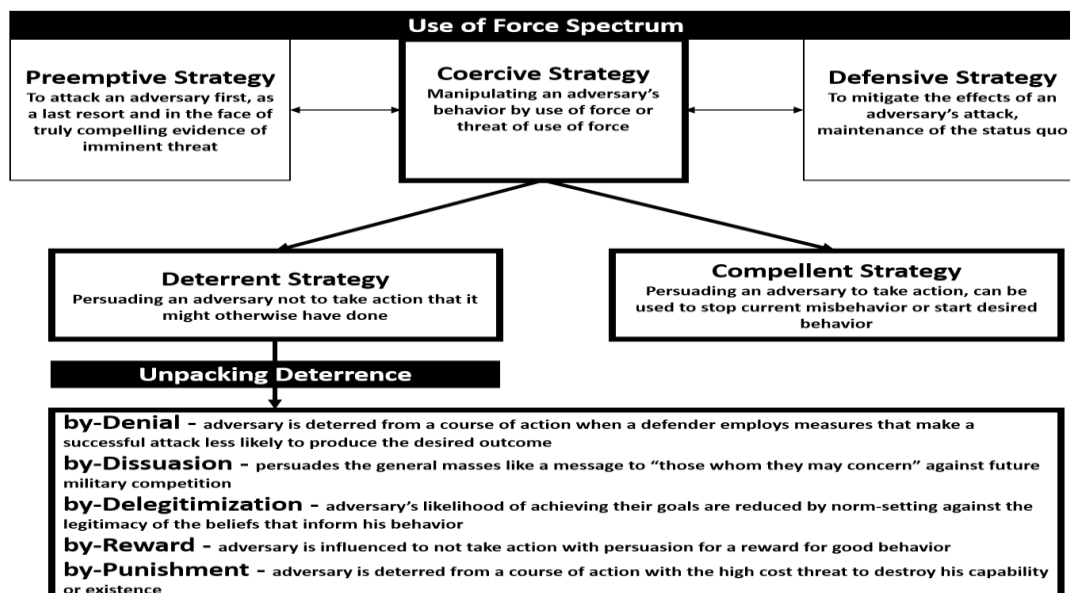
Figure 1. Use of Force Spectrum and Deterrent Strategy Definitions.

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[25] Wilner, 456.

Deterrence Prerequisites and Key Attributes

From a review of the key works of Schelling, Gray, Freedman, Goldman, and Wilner, there are a few promising concepts worth mentioning for deterring violent extremist organizations, including ISIS. First, any state or non-state actor can be deterred. One simply needs to understand the pressure points, desires and vulnerabilities, of an adversary. Second, strength is its own kind of deterrence and needs to be clearly evident. The position of advantage in a bargain situation requires strength, power, and flexibility in oneself and allies. Third, legitimacy is necessary for deterrence utilizing norm-setting. To gain legitimacy, international acceptance of norms is essential, from all actors involved (state, non-state, and VEO). Fourth, organizations have hierarchies and sub-groups that require specific deterrence actions. A state or non-state actor will have subordinate elements that require different applications of force. Fifth, in the bargain of deterrence, there must be accommodation, or a way out for the adversary. If there is no motive for changing behavior, the adversary will continue their violent course and not return to the peaceful status quo.

In deterrence, the will of the adversary is directly related to his risk calculus, or cost/benefit calculus. Glenn Synder, in his classic work *Deterrence and Defense*, postulates there are four factors to the adversary's risk calculus:

1. The valuation of his war objectives,
2. The cost which he expects to suffer as a result of various possible responses by the deterrer,
3. The probability of various responses, including no response, and
4. The probability of winning the objectives with each possible response.[26]

The concepts on deterrence allow for the extrapolation of three prerequisites of deterrence: restraint, right to exist, and communication. The prerequisites are necessary for

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[26] Glenn Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 12.

successful deterrence. Restraint is striking a delicate balance between using enough force or the threat of force to alter the adversary's calculus without tipping the calculus too much where escalation is inevitable. Restraint does not equal proportional in a deterrence problem, because to alter the adversary's will it is necessary to demonstrate superior capability and the futility of the adversary obtaining their objectives. The balance in the use of force for deterrence by punishment is, using too much creates escalation or possibly losing legitimacy, while using too little does not alter the adversary's calculus.

Right to exist is a fundamental shift of accepting some VEOs cannot be totally destroyed and success may simply be decreasing the violence to acceptable levels. Compromise is achievable in the situation where the extremist retains his ideology, just not the use of violence. Fighting a VEO is like fighting an idea, unless the root causes are addressed there is little chance of totally destroying it. The fight against Al Qaeda is the perfect example. By some measures, this fight continues after thirty years, and not even the death of its founder, Osama bin Laden, led to its destruction.

Communication or negotiation can be implicit or deliberate, where both sides of the conflict understand each other and are willing to comply with the bargain. Implicit communication is effective when the sides establish norms over time, where both sides in a conflict understand the unwritten redlines of action. Deliberate communication or negotiation is possible when both sides in a conflict agree to discuss their claims directly or through third parties. Either way, communication is an essential element of deterrence and a position of never talking to an adversary is counterproductive to decreasing the level of violence or achieving lasting peace. Even when publicly stated as a policy of no negotiation, rarely is that concept absolute.

Along the same contingent logic of the prerequisites, one can infer three key deterrence attributes: credible, licit, and commitment. Like Schelling's three C's, the aim of the key attributes is to counter the traditional failings of deterrence. To avoid the pitfalls, deterrence must be credible, have a licit foundation, and demonstrated commitment to follow through. Credible deterrence is convincing because there is sufficient capability to be effective. Licit deterrence conforms to lawful international norms and adds legitimacy to the action. Deterrence with commitment is a believed promise that obligates the adversary to trust the dilemma they face has serious consequences. Together with the prerequisites, the three key attributes of deterrence provide important considerations for the planning and execution of flexible deterrent options.

In summary, deterrence is just as relevant to today's environment as it was during the Cold War. Conventional deterrence, like nuclear deterrence, can meaningfully contribute to developing strategies against today's adversaries. Most importantly, deterrence strategies are not cookie-cutter and need to be specifically tailored to the intended adversary with a complete understanding of deterrence prerequisites and key attributes. What follows in the next chapter is a synthesis of the aforementioned views on deterrence placed within J.F.C Fuller's conditional use of force framework consisting of physical, cognitive, and moral spheres. This approach is an effective place to start in operationalizing deterrence against VEOs.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL DETERRENCE FRAMEWORK

Comprehensive Deterrence is a whole-of-government approach that retains the positional advantage of the US by preventing an adversary's action through the existence of credible physical, cognitive, and moral threats by raising the perceived benefit of action to an unacceptable level.[1]
ARSOF Next: A Return to First Principles, Strategic Vision

Applying deterrence to a situation requires a framework for determining the purpose and desired effects for the threat or use of force. Identifying the purpose often illuminates the desired end to be achieved. J.F.C. Fuller refers to this as the conditions of military force and establishes three spheres where influence can be applied: physical, mental (cognitive), and moral.[2] Comprehensive deterrence begins with examining the spheres and is the first step in operationalizing deterrence.

The physical sphere's main feature is structure and freedom of movement, composed of military units and equipment, armies, logistics, safe havens, communications, industrial areas, and geography. The cognitive sphere's main feature is control of the organization, composed of intelligence, ideas, ideology, plans, and doctrine. The moral sphere's main feature is maintenance of the movement, composed of will, courage, fear, loyalty, determination, patriotism, and tradition. In Fuller's model, the spheres are not independent of each other, and the use of force will commonly affect two or all simultaneously.

Just as important to Fuller's three spheres is his application of force in what he terms, the law of the economy of force. Fuller's economy of force dictates that to win, "the desired end will be achieved with the smallest expenditure of force."[3] The amount of force a nation

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[1] United States Army Special Operations Command, "ARSOF Next: A Return to First Principles," *Soc.mil*, http://www.soc.mil/swcs/SWmag/archive/ARSOF_Next/ARSOF%20Next.pdf (accessed September 5, 2016).
[2] John F. C. Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 1998), 182.
[3] Ibid, 202.

has at its disposal is limited, and once used it is gone forever. Advocates for coercive strategies, like deterrence, understand economy of force and realize it can be the best use of potential force to achieve the desired outcome. Schelling and Freedman reinforce this idea of potential force against the danger of all action being preemptive, where the cost to the protagonist will be too much to bear.

Figure 2, below, is a conceptual framework that aligns deterrence strategies with physical, cognitive, and moral spheres. Similar to Wilner's approach of operationalizing deterrence and unpacking terrorism, thinking about deterrence conceptually will enhance comprehensively understanding how deterrence can be used against VEOs and ISIS. The short title of each approach aligned with the physical, cognitive, and moral spheres are *See My Strength*, *Can We Agree*, and *Feel the Burn*. The purpose of strategy is to think critically about obtaining more favorable outcomes, and the conceptual framework below visually adds to understanding potential favorable outcomes using deterrence against ISIS and other VEOs.[4]

J.F.C. Fuller's Conditions on the Use of Force Framework

Physical	Cognitive	Moral
Central Characteristic of Each Sphere:		
Structure	Control	Maintenance
Planes, Tanks, Ships	Reason, Imagination, Will	Fear, Courage, Morale
Application to Islamic State and VEOs		
Safe havens, freedom of movement, and state sponsorship Wealth and material assets Leadership	Social acceptance Religious and political sympathy and recruitment Group cohesiveness	Publicity Personal glory Tactical success or failure Will to continue

Prerequisites for Deterrence:
Restraint, Right to Exist, and Communication

Three Approaches to Deterrence

"See My Strength"	"Can We Agree"	"Feel The Burn"
Aligned with the Three Key Attributes of Deterrence:		
Credible	Licit	Commitment
Deterrence by-Denial by-Dissuasion	Deterrence by-Delegitimization by-Reward	Deterrence by-Punishment

Figure 2. Deterrence aligned with conditions on the use of force.

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[4] Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21ˢᵗ Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 5.

Three Deterrence Approaches

The three approaches to deterrence further describe the process of operationalizing deterrence with desired outcomes. A fundamental difference with a defeat strategy is that operationalized deterrence's aim is to target the desire or will of an adversary, rather than capability.

All three deterrence approaches should be used simultaneously to achieve the best outcome. Deterrence approaches should be deliberately taken and not measured indirectly through other actions, otherwise there is no way of determining their effectiveness. For example, the apparent random drone targeting of ISIS and Al Qaeda leadership from Pakistan to Yemen may have some indirect deterrent effect, but has become a steady drumbeat of strikes that long ago lost any effect on changing the adversary's risk calculus. Deterrence is hard to measure and even harder if specific deterrence actions are not deliberately planned and executed in accordance with an operational plan. Operationalizing deterrence is best done when specific actions are taken to meet desired outcomes, where direct causal linkages are identified and measurable.

See My Strength – Physical Sphere - Deterrence Approach #1

The See My Strength approach primarily uses deterrence by denial and dissuasion and is most likely to prevent future regional and global attacks. Denial examples include: hardened physical security at vulnerable areas, robust cyber security limiting access to global outreach through the internet, and higher scrutiny and monitoring of global money transactions. Dissuasion examples include: conventional force forward basing and presence for rapid response, long range precision guided capability, and drone capability for targeted killings. Key to this approach is credibility attribute, where the adversary is fully aware and

understands their opponent's capability to counter their aggressive acts. All actions for this approach should be overt and easily observable. Additionally, security cooperation and alliances are known, so that the adversary knows the coalition they are aligned against. The fundamental precept for the adversary in this approach is to get into his decision cycle and affect his cost/benefit calculus. For example, the deteree does not do X-action because X will not succeed, produce the desired outcome, or may incur an unwanted response. In this way, the adversary's action will have no benefit or may even incur a cost of loss of personnel or risk to morale of anticipated failure. The risk for this deterrence approach is political and related to will. The adversary may see the strength, but believe their opponent does not have the political will or credibility to take action.

Can We Agree – Cognitive Sphere - Deterrence Approach #2

The Can We Agree approach primarily uses deterrence by delegitimization and reward and is most likely to prevent persuasiveness of extremist ideology and have lasting effects with norm-setting. Delegitimization examples include: international norm setting against extremist ideology and strengthening communities against an environment conducive to radicalization. Reward examples include: offering a cease fire for entering negotiations and accepting the adversary's right to exist if they end their violent aggression. Key to this approach is affecting the adversary's cognitive sphere, where they lose control of their organization's ability to recruit and operate in acceptable space. The licit attribute dominates this approach and will require whole-of-government and whole-of-nations legitimacy with norm setting. The fundamental precept for the adversary in this approach is to get into their decision cycle and affect their cost/benefit calculus. For example, the deteree does not do X-action because it receives a greater benefit than the alternative. The risk for this deterrence

approach is communication and negotiation with the adversary may legitimize their existence, actions, and ideology.

Feel the Burn – Mental Sphere - Deterrence Approach #3

The Feel the Burn approach primarily uses deterrence by punishment and, although a necessary component of deterrence, is least likely to be effective if used without the other approaches and incurs a high risk to normalizing a situation or maintaining the status quo. Punishment examples include: destroying a critical resource or killing a key leader essential to the violent extremist organization. Key to this approach is affecting the adversary's ability to maintain their momentum and challenging their morale and will to fight. The fundamental precept for the adversary is to get into their decision cycle and affect their cost/benefit calculus. For example, the deteree does not do X-action because it incurs a high cost that will destroy an organizational critical capability. The primary risk for this deterrence approach is an escalation in the cycle of violence. Another risk with this approach is if the adversary expects punishment regardless whether it acquiesces to a deterrent threat, then it will have no reason to comply and no reason to change behavior. Therefore, communicating the deterrent threat is an essential component of this approach.

In summary, the three deterrence approaches provide an effective way to work within the physical, cognitive, and moral spheres to develop conditions of positional advantage against adversaries. Once the dominant sphere is identified, operationalizing deterrent options begins with outcome based and purpose driven approaches designed to change an adversary's behavior through fear or reward. Effecting the adversary's risk calculus can be viewed as selecting specific targeted packages to reach desired ends.

CHAPTER 4: ISRAEL'S DETERRENCE STRATEGY

Historically, Israel offers perhaps the only case study where different approaches towards the deterrence of non-state actors and terrorists have been tried and tested over many decades – decades during which Israel's political and military leaders assumed that political violence could not be entirely stopped, only limited, thereby transcending a singular and binary view of the use of force.[1]

Thomas Rid

Israel is a relevant case study to observe the way deterrence is included in strategic and operational planning. Since Israel's creation as a state in 1948 to the present, it faced a continuous internal and existential threat. Potential adversaries surround Israel in Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian territories, and Gaza, as well as Iran as a more distant threat. Israel's geographic and political situation creates a situation where deterrence has real impact, and along with defense is one of the principle pillars of Israel's strategic doctrine.[2]

A fundamental difference in the way Israel utilizes deterrence is due to its conceptual view where deterrence is "closer to deterring crime than to deterring a nuclear strike."[3] Unlike the Cold War, which utilized specific and absolute deterrence, today's non-state actors and political violence require general and restrictive deterrence. In the Cold War there were two primary actors, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Deterrence was specific in that it was aligned against one adversary. Also for the U.S. and the Soviets, nuclear deterrence was absolute in that only one instance of a nuclear bomb detonating equaled failure for the deterrence strategy. Israel has multiple enemies, so its deterrence must be more general. From the founding of the state, Israel realized that political violence, state and non-state

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[1] Thomas Rid, "Deterrence beyond the State: The Israeli Experience," *Contemporary Security Policy* Vol. 33 (April 2012): 125.
[2] Ahmad Khalidi, "Special Document File: Original English Translation of the 2015 Gadi Eisenkot IDF Strategy," *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 45 No. 2 (Winter 2016): 3.
[3] Rid, 126.

aggression, against them would never stop entirely and, like deterring crime, their form of deterrence needed to be more restrictive than absolute.

After the 2006 Lebanon War, Israel conducted studies on some of its failures and designed a new Israeli Defense Force (IDF) Strategy under the leadership of Lieutenant General Gadi Eisenkot, Israel's Chief of General Staff for the Israeli Defense Forces. The latest Eisenkot IDF Strategy includes numerous lessons from the troubles with Gaza from 2008 through 2014 and Israel's operations Cast Lead, Pillar of Defense, and Protective Edge. Unclassified and widely published in 2015; it will be referred to simply as the IDF Strategy for the remainder of this thesis. Brigadier General Itai Brun, the leader of the Israeli think tank Dado Center, summarized the major change in IDF strategy: "'We used to plan for military decision, and deterrence was the outcome. Now we're planning for deterrence. That's the change.'"[4]

For Israel, deterrence plays a large role throughout its operations continuum, or spectrum of conflict. Israel's operations continuum includes "three possible statuses: routine, emergency, and war (abbreviated as REW)." The routine status is also referred to as the campaign between wars (CBW) and is telling for Israel's mindset that it always needs to be prepared for war. The IDF Strategy, like the 2015 U.S. National Military Strategy, is a strategic communication document meant for internal and external audiences. On one hand, it informs its defense forces what their priorities will be in the spectrum of conflict and the main threats their country faces. On the other hand, it is a clear message to potential adversaries of what actions will behold them should they attack. Clearly a choice for LTG Eisenkot in the IDF Strategy, threats from state actors are downgraded and the most likely

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[4] Rid, 141.

threats named in the strategy are from sub-state and non-state actors, like Hamas and

Hezbollah. In the way threats are identified, the IDF Strategy is directed against violent

extremist organizations.

Unique to this latest version of Israel's strategy, and due to its alignment primarily

against VEOs, the IDF strategy for the first time acknowledges the limits of force alone in

"addressing its political dilemmas."[5] The IDF Strategy, applying lessons from previous

conflicts with Hezbollah and Hamas, places a primacy on diplomacy, perception-shaping,

cyber warfare, media operations, and legal investigative efforts to enhance legitimacy. A part

of the strategy emphasizes publicly delegitimizing threats as a way of restricting their

freedom of action, while simultaneously increasing Israel's freedom of maneuver and

position of advantage. Israel understands the limitations of brute force and balancing between

retaliatory actions and overwhelming force used solely for revenge, which inevitably leads to

a perception of illegitimacy.

The IDF Strategy outlines two main considerations for deterrence and three main

deterrence components. Understanding the considerations and components provides insight

into how Israel defines deterrence and the application of deterrence in the strategy. The

considerations are:

a. Without specific context – *general and cumulative over time*, to preserve the
   status quo and shape the rules of the game in a favorable manner for Israel.
b. In the context of a specific crisis – *specific and focused*, to force the enemy to act
   or avoid action, and thus end deterioration of situation, and prevent war.[6]

The considerations create a framework where deterrence actions will be general or specific.

In general deterrence, the target is indiscriminate and relies on demonstrating an overmatch

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[5] Khalidi, IDF Strategy, 4.
[6] Ibid, 18.

of strength and technological superiority against all adversaries. Another consideration for general deterrence is past behavior or previous actions where norms for behavior are established. In specific deterrence, the target is discriminate and the focus is on creating a situation where a known, or identified, enemy yields to threat or use of force. For specific deterrence, Israel's definition blurs the traditional lines between deterrence and compellance. Under emergency conditions, Israel may use force to change the status quo to a new and more favorable position.

> Israel's three components of deterrence are:
>
> i. Credible threat of strong offensive actions that will cost the enemy dearly, if it attacks us. This component relies on:
>> 1) Force buildup, partly visible to the enemy, which demonstrates ability and willingness to cause damage.
>> 2) Perception-shaping operations, demonstrating the IDF's readiness to accept risks.
>> 3) Limited offensive actions, to signal deviation from the rules of the game and readiness to accept risks.
> ii. Force build up that demonstrates to the enemy the futility [of its plans] (for example, defense systems).
> iii. Impeding and disrupting capabilities.[7]

The three components of deterrence should be viewed in the context of preventing adversaries from firing rockets and missiles at Israel. Like the two aforementioned considerations, there is a blurring of lines in components between deterrence, defense, and the logic behind preemptive action. The Israeli iron dome defense always reminds its adversaries that rockets and missiles will not reach their intended targets. Likewise, a part of Israel's deterrence is that it will strike preemptively when necessary to destroy adversary offensive capability. Also in the IDF strategy is a warning to Israel's enemies, namely Hezbollah and Hamas, that it will conduct immediate ground operations to disrupt and

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[7] Khalidi, IDF Strategy, 18-19.

destroy areas where rockets and missiles are fired. This is a profound statement and meant as a warning to its enemies that Israel will not wait and rely solely on air strikes against hostile rocket and missile fires, like it did initially in the 2006 Lebanon War.

One aspect of deterrence missing from the Israeli three components is conciliatory actions, meant to create space and time for stability and peace. Israeli's proved in the past that once conditions are met, they can be conciliatory towards removing forward deployed troops and will accept third party moderation for cease fires and peace negotiations. A study of Israeli tactics and policies from 1987-2004 concluded, "conciliatory actions are generally related to decreases in terror" and can be more successful than repressive and punitive actions.[8]

Similar to Wilner's view of contemporary deterrence, the Israeli framework advocates tailored deterrence. The IDF Strategy specifies that, "deterrence must be targeted and tailored for each enemy; it must rely on continuous analysis of enemy characteristics, considerations, capabilities, identity, and decision-making process."[9] The Israeli deterrence options for Hezbollah are different than those used for Hamas in Gaza. However, the ultimate goal is to achieve the position of advantage over the enemy and bring about a better peace. For Hezbollah, the areas from which rockets and missiles are fired was of utmost concern and for Hamas the tunnels reaching far into Israel needed concentrated effort.

Critics of Israel's form of deterrence often cite its disproportionate use of force and brutal tactics. The IDF Strategy is often confused with the Dahiya Doctrine, named after a city in Beirut where alleged intentional disproportional force was used to strike fear in the

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[8] Laura Dugan and Erica Chenoweth, "Moving Beyond Deterrence: The Effectiveness of Raising the Expected Utility of Abstaining from Terrorism in Israel," *American Sociological Review.* Vol. 77 (2012): 597.
[9] Khalidi, IDF Strategy, 18.

civilian population supporting Hezbollah.[10] The United Nations (UN) cautioned and condemned Israel several times for its actions causing excessive civilian casualties or the disproportionate use of force and means fighting against its enemies. Like the U.S. in many of its engagements in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan, Israel justifies its actions by saying that it takes all measures necessary to prevent civilian casualties. Even more controversial than military strikes into Lebanon or the Palestinian territories is Israel's punitive policy of demolishing homes of suicide bomber family members. The international community has not always believed Israel's rationalization for its use of force.

Another criticism of the IDF Strategy is that it does not go far enough in spelling out the exact redlines for its adversaries not to cross. As a strategic communication document, the IDF Strategy does not deliberately spell out all the aggressive tactics its adversaries might use and the exact countermeasures Israel will take in response. Instead, Israel relies on norms created from previous engagements and general statements of right to defense. Pragmatically, every circumstance is different and it would be impossible to detail every instance of force with appropriate counter-force. Also, if Israel is too explicit in redlines it sends the wrong message that certain actions are acceptable. Israel relies heavily on what it terms the "rules of the game" and deterrence by trial and error with no formal codified outcomes.[11]

The next section provides an overview of the IDF Strategy's deterrence options evaluated against the three prerequisites for deterrence and the three key attributes of deterrence.

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[10] Rashid Khalidi, "The Dahiya Doctrine, Proportionality, and War Crimes," *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 44 No. 1 (Autumn 2014): 7.
[11] Rid, 137.

Analysis

Deterrence is generated within consciousness, but is also based on physical, tangible elements that the enemy includes in its calculations. These include outcomes of previous rounds of confrontation, routine activities that demonstrate the futility of confrontation, and a constant threat to use of force.
2015 IDF Strategy

One can learn many lessons from Israel's IDF Strategy and use of deterrence, especially when linked to the previous chapter on contemporary deterrence theory and the three approaches to deterrence. Most importantly, Israel operationalizes deterrence in its fundamental defense strategy. Israel accepts deterrence as a major part of its strategy against VEOs and deterrence permeates all decision making. Israel understands the limits of force in addressing its political dilemma and sees deterrence as fundamental to maintaining stability and peace within its sphere of the world. Pragmatically, success for Israel does not equal the end of violence; it simply means less violence. Secondly, Israel's form of deterrence is both general and specific, when required. When Israel decides on specific deterrence options, it is tailored to the crisis and enemy. Lastly, Israel's concept of deterrence is more of a larger coercive strategy that blends traditional forms of deterrence with compellence. For Israel, this concept is still considered deterrence, where sometimes the use of force, not just the threat of force, is required to establish norms or the rules of the game.

Israel's deterrence strategy aligns well with the three prerequisites for deterrence (right to exist, restraint, and communication). First, Israel is adamant about condemning violence, and recognizes other nations' and actors' right to exist. Israel fought several wars for its right to exist, and because of the importance of this claim, it does not deny this right to others. One only has to look at the ancient city of Jerusalem, where Jewish, Christian, and

Muslim faiths have the freedom to worship, as evidence of Israel's staunch belief in its own and other's right to exist. Israel's stated national goals are:

    a. Securing Israel's existence, and safeguarding its territorial integrity and security of its citizens and residents.
    b. Preserving the values of the State of Israel and its character as a Jewish and democratic state, and as a national home for the Jewish people.
    c. Securing Israel's social and economic resilience.
    d. Strengthening Israel's international and regional standing, while striving for peace with its neighbors.[12]

Second, although not without controversy, Israel practices restraint in its proclaimed right of self-defense and adds to its legitimacy when it remains within its borders and does not occupy territory in adjacent states. When conflict erupts, Israel quickly attempts to control the violence and return to stability. Israel's withdrawal from its occupation of territory in Lebanon in 2005, and its granting more autonomy to the Palestinian territories, are examples of restraint. For Israel to strengthen its regional standing, it has to adhere to "maintenance of peace accords, and fully utilizing potential for cooperation with moderate forces in the region."[13]

Third, Israel's strategy of deterrence is effective due to its willingness to keep lines of communication open with adversaries. Communication for Israel is not always open and direct, but even through tacit communication and establishing rules of the game, it understands the requirement of communication for effective deterrence. Israel's strategy includes a willingness to keep cooperation mechanisms and public diplomacy in use throughout conflict.

Israel's deterrence strategy aligns well with the three key attributes of successful deterrence (credible, licit, and commitment), corresponding to the three approaches (See My

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[12] Khalidi, IDF Strategy, 8-9.
[13] Ibid, 9.

Strength, Can We Agree, and Feel the Burn). The importance of Israel's credibility is specifically mentioned in the three components of deterrence in the IDF Strategy; summarized as "credible threat of offensive actions that will cost the enemy dearly," "force build-up that demonstrates to the enemy the futility [of its plans]", and "impeding and disrupting capabilities."[14]

Israel places a primacy on achieving and maintaining legitimacy in its deterrence strategy; summarized in the IDF Strategy as, "it is necessary to consider the status of legitimacy in the overall situation, and correspondingly adjust relevant elements of force buildup and deployment."[15] Israel achieves legitimacy with perception-shaping efforts that delegitimize the enemy and increase regional and international support for Israel's actions and right of self-defense.

Lastly, Israel breaks its commitment to deterrence by punishment into three main features: "severity, certainty, and celerity."[16] The concept of severity is the level of retaliation needed to secure a military and political decision. Israel intends to achieve a cease-fire or political settlement decision quickly, so severity will not always be proportional and frequently is designed to demonstrate its overall power and dominance. The concept of certainty is that Israel will always respond, especially if a rule of the game is violated. In Israel's situation, but also universally applicable, not responding is perceived as weakness and will likely incur more aggression. The concept of celerity is rapid response to reinforce the rules of the game. In a bargain, deterrence situation, rapid response is required to overtly demonstrate to the adversary the undesired behavior. A problem with celerity is that it is not

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[14] Khalidi, IDF Strategy, 18-19.
[15] Ibid, 20.
[16] Rid, 128.

always possible to know the exact enemy who conducted the attack and sometimes

investigations are needed or there are delays if a terrorist group does not immediately claim

credit for the act.

CHAPTER 5: U.S. COUNTER ISIS STRATEGY

Our objective is clear: We will degrade, and ultimately destroy ISIS through a comprehensive and sustained counterterrorism strategy.

President Barack Obama

This chapter presents the U.S. strategy to counter ISIS and assess the role of deterrence, or lack of deterrence in its objectives. The following section evaluates U.S. strategy against contemporary deterrence theory and compares it to Israel's IDF Strategy.

ISIS is a global force to be reckoned with and is specifically mentioned in many countries' strategies, including both the Israeli strategy and the 2015 U.S. National Military Strategy. ISIS is a relatively new VEO, but its base ideology developed in the Muslim world over centuries. Born of the power struggle between the Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) and Al Qaeda (AQ) over control of Iraq and Syrian Sunni jihadist groups, ISIS succeeded in dominating the region and world as the preeminent leader in violent militant Islamic extremism. In claiming the caliphate and regional territory from Raqqa to Mosul, demanding all Muslims swear allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and provoking the rest of the world with acts of terrorism, ISIS proved its views are not mainstream and there was a significant backlash in the Muslim world. ISIS created enemies everywhere and pitched its legitimacy in holding the territory it controls. A strategy against ISIS is complicated because it has characteristics of both a proto-state and non-state actor. Appendix A of this thesis contains a summary of ISIS's history and identity for a greater depth of understanding its origins and root causes of VEOs.

In a September 2014 speech to the United Nations general assembly, President Barack Obama outlined an initial strategy against ISIS. An excerpt of the speech is below (emphasis added in italics):

ISIS must be *degraded* and ultimately *destroyed*. This group has terrorized all who they come across in Iraq and Syria. Mothers, sisters, daughters have been subjected to rape as a weapon of war. Innocent children have been gunned down. Bodies have been dumped in mass graves. Religious minorities have been starved to death. In the most horrific crimes imaginable, innocent human beings have been beheaded, with videos of the atrocity distributed to shock the conscience of the world. No God condones this terror. No grievance justifies these actions. *There can be no reasoning - no negotiation - with this brand of evil*. The only language understood by killers like this is the language of force. So the United States of America will work with a broad coalition to dismantle this network of death.[1]

Susan Rice, the President's National Security Advisor, added to this sentiment with a speech she made in 2016 at the Air Force Academy: "ISIS is a twisted network of murderers and maniacs, and they must be rooted out, hunted down, and destroyed."[2]

The US strategy against ISIS has nine lines of effort (in no particular order of priority):

1. Supporting effective governance in Iraq
2. Denying ISIS safe-haven
3. Building partner capacity
4. Enhancing intelligence collection on ISIS
5. Disrupting ISIS finances
6. Exposing ISIS's true nature
7. Disrupting the flow of foreign fighters
8. Protecting the homeland
9. Humanitarian support.[3]

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[1] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly," *Whitehouse.gov*, September 24, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly (accessed October 17, 2016). Emphasis added in italics.

[2] Jim Garamone, "Rice Details U.S. Whole of Government Approach to Defeating ISIL," *Defense.gov*, April 15, 2016 http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/722259/rice-details-us-whole-of-government-approach-to-defeating-isil (accessed October 17, 2016).

[3] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "FACT SHEET: The Administration's Strategy to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Updated FY15 Overseas Contingency Operations Request," *Whitehouse.gov*, November 7, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/11/07/fact-sheet-administration-s-strategy-counter-islamic-state-iraq-and-leva (accessed October 17, 2016).

In the earliest phases of planning the strategy, it was evident the U.S. would need a unified global coalition to ensure success. Late in 2014, through diplomatic channels, the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS formed. Today, there are 68 members in the coalition, with just five lines of effort for the coalition:

1. Providing military support to our partners;
2. Impeding the flow of foreign fighters;
3. Stopping ISIS's financing and funding;
4. Addressing humanitarian crises in the region; and
5. Exposing ISIS's true nature.[4]

ISIS's unique organization can be broken down into three distinct groups: the ISIS core in Iraq and Syria, its global networks (foreign terrorist fighter, financial, and propaganda), and its affiliates.[5] With the ultimate goal that ISIS is degraded and destroyed, the strategy is offensive in nature and utilizes several indicators for success: percent of territory ISIS lost, numbers of foreign fighters per month flowing into the fight, amount of ISIS revenue stream cut, ISIS leadership attrition, and ISIS media output.[6]

Recent updates on the above indicators suggest that ISIS is on the decline and the coalition is winning the battles in Iraq and Syria.[7] Absent from any of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS's press releases are indicators of ISIS claimed global terrorist attacks. ISIS-inspired terrorist attacks are increasing with recent tragic events in the U.S., France, Germany, Turkey, Russia, Kenya, Canada, Belgium, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. ISIS-inspired terrorists, often referred to as lone-wolf or homegrown extremists,

[4] U.S. Department of State, Diplomacy in Action, "The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL," *State.gov,* https://www.state.gov/s/seci/ (accessed January 1, 2017).
[5] Ibid.
[6] U.S. Department of State, Diplomacy in Action, "Plenary Meeting of the Global Coalition to Counter-ISIL," *State.gov*, November 28, 2016. https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/11/264576.htm (accessed January 1, 2017).
[7] Congressional Research Service, *The Islamic State and U.S. Policy, February 2017* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017), 1.

account for most of the attacks and frequently with no direct contact to ISIS core leadership. The global coalition strategy may have stopped the foreign fighters joining the fight in Iraq, Syria, and Libya, but now they are remaining in their countries and conducting terrorist attacks. The newly rebranded ISIS magazine, *Rumiyah*, encouraged jihadists to drive trucks and cars into crowds of people and its followers responded with this tactic in France, the U.S., and Germany.[8] ISIS's strategy to counter the global coalition may be to provoke the West into a harsh backlash against Muslims, thus driving them to ISIS or other extremist groups for protection.

Absent from any language in the U.S. strategy to counter ISIS or the Global Coalition's strategy is the word deter or a deterrence approach. Some of the reasoning for this is deliberate, but also may be from a misunderstanding of deterrence and its application. When the President says his aim is to destroy an organization and that there will be no negotiation, this clearly restricts civilian and military planners from entering into a bargain with the adversary. The 2015 U.S. National Military Strategy communicates the clear goal of disrupt, degrade, and defeat ISIS and VEOs. Specifically, the U.S. military strategy establishes the objectives to:

1. disrupt VEO planning and operations;
2. degrade support structures;
3. remove leadership;
4. interdict finances;
5. impede the flow of foreign fighters;
6. counter malign influences;
7. liberate captured territory; and
8. ultimately defeat them.[9]

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[8] Rita Katz, "Barack Obama's War on ISIS has Failed-the Jihadi Scourge is Stronger than Ever," *Yahoo.com*, December 30, 2016 https://uk.sports.yahoo.com/news/barack-obamas-war-isis-failed-155322052.html (accessed January 1, 2017).

[9] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, June 2015): 8.

Many of the military objectives are vague and do not easily lend themselves to explaining exactly how they will be accomplished. The objective defeat, used in the military strategy, is to create a situation where "the enemy force has temporarily or permanently lost the physical means or the will to fight . . . defeat can result from the use of force or the threat of its use."[10] Clearly, the U.S. military strategy is aimed at using force to remove ISIS's means to fight with targeted killings of ISIS leadership, destruction of ISIS's financial capability and money reserves, and training, advising, and assisting local coalition forces to directly attack ISIS strongholds in Iraq and Syria. Less evident in the strategy are the efforts to deny safe havens or change the root conditions that drive someone to become radicalized and join the extremist organization. If there is any deterrence in the military strategy, it is indirect, mainly in the physical sphere, and aimed at demonstrating the futility of the enemy continuing its fight against overwhelming force. Thus far, ISIS's risk calculus is unchanged with indirect deterrence, and the costs of ISIS continuing the fight have not reached an unacceptable level.

The next section evaluates the U.S. strategy against contemporary deterrence theory and compares it to Israel's IDF Strategy to recommend adding deterrence approaches to a strategy against ISIS.

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[10] U.S. Army. *Terms and Military Symbols*. ADRP 1-02 (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the U.S. Army, 16 November 2016): 1-12.

Analysis

The problems in Syria and Iraq are too large. It's like fighting a wildfire with a fire extinguisher. We need to get it down to a smaller fire, and then we can use our tools. Right now we are fighting a forest fire with a very exhausted fire extinguisher.

Patrick Skinner, Director of Special Projects for the Soufan Group

The debate continues whether the U.S. strategy to counter ISIS is working. From the earliest formulation of the strategy, it was clearly stated that the fight against ISIS would be a long, protracted campaign.[11] However, critics of the strategy point to not seeing results fast enough, the mounting humanitarian and refugee crisis, resurgent global terrorist attacks, and lack of a coherent plan for what to do after ISIS is defeated.[12] Even if it is possible to destroy ISIS completely, how do you destroy an idea like the caliphate? In a hypothetical situation where ISIS is destroyed, another extremist organization will likely take its place and it could be Al Qaeda that surges to prominence once again.

The U.S. strategy may be utilizing indirect deterrence, but to this point the U.S. has not effectively operationalized deterrence in its plans. Many lessons can be learned from the U.S.'s strategy to counter ISIS, especially when compared to Israel's IDF Strategy and its use of deterrence. Examining the conclusions from contemporary deterrence theory, the three prerequisites and the three key attributes of deterrence provide some recommendations to the winning strategy against ISIS.

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[11] Timelines for counter-VEO campaigns (terrorists and insurgents) are generally thought to be long and involving the complication in support of local partners and coalitions. CJCS, The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 8.

[12] Criticism of the U.S. Strategy to counter ISIS reached a crescendo in public debate and Congressional testimony prior to the Presidential election in November 2016. On 28 January 2017, President Trump issued a memorandum directing the Secretary of Defense to develop a new plan to defeat ISIS and present the plan to the President within 30 days. Congressional Research Service, February 2017, 4.

From the overview of contemporary deterrence theory there are three relevant points to highlight. First, ISIS may have a unique context and is more complicated than any other VEO, but just like any other state or non-state actor, it can be deterred. The absence of direct use of deterrence in the U.S. strategy is surprising in that it has yet to fully utilize an important tool in its arsenal. Deterrence can be used on any actor, one simply needs to understand the pressure points, desires and vulnerabilities, of an adversary. Organizations have hierarchies and sub-groups that require specific deterrence actions. As previously mentioned, ISIS is generally separated into three groups: the core, networks, and affiliates. If ISIS's fanatic leaders in the highest positions are blind to deterrence, then coerce mid-level and operator-level fighters or financiers. This concept is similar to Israel's IDF Strategy, where deterrence is described as both general and specific. Israel's form of general deterrence is cumulative over time and meant to shape individual behavior, and deterring political violence is more like deterring crime. Israel's specific deterrence is tailored to one precise adversary or group and is meant to establish rules of the game, or the bargain.

Second, strength is its own kind of deterrence and needs to be clearly evident. The position of advantage in the strategy against ISIS is not the supremacy of the U.S., as the strongest superpower in the world, but the expanding global coalition. A bargain situation requires strength, power, and flexibility in oneself and allies. This is a stark difference between the U.S. strategy and the Israeli strategy. Israel's deterrence strategy is only concerned with its sphere of influence and region of the world, not leading and unifying a global coalition. The most important gain from a global coalition is the power of legitimacy and norm setting. To gain legitimacy, international acceptance of norms is essential, from all actors involved. An important example of international norm setting was the passing of UN

Security Council and General Assembly Resolution 2170 and 2178 encouraging all member states to condemn violent extremism and terrorism in all forms and restricting movement of foreign fighters transiting countries. Norm setting, like UN resolutions, need to be used more in what Israel terms perception-shaping operations. Israel's strategy actively pursues the use of media, public diplomacy, and legal efforts to bolster domestic support, build international legitimacy, and influence their adversaries. U.S. led efforts, with global coalition partners, need to take advantage of their unified position of strength and engage in more perception-shaping operations. These efforts may limit ISIS's outreach potential, lead to fracturing of the ISIS core, network, and affiliates, and possibly lead to political accommodation.

Third, in the bargain of deterrence, there must be accommodation, or a way out for the adversary. If there is no motive for changing behavior, the adversary will continue their violent course and not return to the stability of the status quo. There are numerous examples where terrorist organizations, once offered accommodation, have agreed to cease fires or negotiations. In some cases, the terrorist organization forms a political wing to enter into political discourse and peaceful settlement of perceived injustices. By no means inclusive, examples of successful accommodation are: Israel (Hamas), Lebanon (Hezbollah), Northern Ireland (IRA and Sinn Fein), Spain (Basque), Italy (Red Brigade), Egypt (Muslim Brotherhood), Sri Lanka (Tamil Tigers), El Salvador (FMLN), and Afghanistan (Taliban).

The third point leads directly into the three prerequisites of deterrence: right to exist, restraint, and communication. The prerequisites may be the number one reason military and civilian planners do not consider utilizing deterrence in the strategy to counter ISIS. Political leaders in the global coalition would have to accept a world where ISIS is allowed to exist and thus accommodation is possible. Is there any part of the world where the U.S. would

allow ISIS to exist and not use force to root them out, hunt them down, and destroy them to the last jihadist fighter? The realistic view for the protracted war is that destroying ISIS is impossible. Changing the dynamics of the situation closer to the Israeli view, where stability and less violence is prioritized over the enemy's total destruction, may yield more time to build a larger coalition, increased legitimacy and norms, establish rules of the game, and address the root conditions that create violent extremism.

Restraint is paramount to right to exist, but also to not falling into the trap ISIS has set where jihadist terrorism provokes the global coalition countries to treat all Muslims harshly and limit individual rights. Using force disproportionally and killing innocent civilians will create a situation where ISIS and other extremist groups gain strength and more easily radicalize and recruit jihadist fighters.

Lastly, communication, whether tacit or deliberate, must be considered to operationalize deterrence. ISIS core, networks, and affiliates need to understand the offer of accommodation and be willing to accept the political terms to stability. Realistically and in the current state of the fight against ISIS, no country from the global coalition is going to open an embassy in Raqqa and have official diplomatic relations with ISIS. Using the Israel example for communication, sometimes third parties broker cease fires or negotiations on peace accords. Even with no channels for dialogue, Israel uses tacit bargaining in what Schelling referred to as the diplomacy of violence. Through trial and error and establishing rules of the game, the deterrence bargain can be achieved. In Israel's form of restrictive deterrence, a single failure in the rules of the game does not equal a failed strategy and sometimes force must be used to reset the rules.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

You know, what we want is to deter . . . the only thing more expensive than deterrence is actually fighting a war, and the only thing more expensive than fighting a war is fighting one and losing one.[1]
General Mark A. Milley, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army

A common saying is everything old is new again, but contemporary deterrence is not like the absolute deterrence used in the Cold War. The world has changed and the most universally acknowledged likely threat today is from VEOs, like ISIS. Deterrence can be applied to VEOs as a part of a winning strategy in the long war to erode the motivational spark that gives rise to extremist violence like terrorism. Deterrence alone will not achieve victory, but does create a situation of stability and relative calm where effective whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approaches can address the root conditions that create support for violent extremist organizations.

Understanding deterrence begins with reviewing the classic forms of deterrence from the scholarly icons like Schelling, Freedman, and Snyder. These experts codified definitions of deterrence and its application as a part of a coercive strategy against, primarily, state actors. Through their eyes we see deterrence as the exploitation of potential force in a bargain called the diplomacy of violence to coerce an adversary to avoid certain courses of action. The classic deterrence scholars shaped the three C's, and necessary components, of deterrence: credible, communication, commitment. In their final works, legitimacy and norm setting incorporate the licit attribute into the field of deterrence as an important consideration.

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[1] U.S. Senate, Committee on Armed Services. "Hearing to Receive Testimony on the Long-Term Budgetary Challenges Facing the Military Services and Innovative Solutions for Maintaining our Military Superiority," *Armed-services.senate.gov*, September 15, 2016 http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/16-69_09-15-16.pdf (accessed December 21, 2016).

Goldman, Wilner, and Gray's trailblazing efforts further advance the understanding of more contemporary deterrence in the latest wave of study. These scholars introduce ways to unpack and tailor deterrence so that it is useful in the context of coercing VEOs and terrorists. Deterrence by denial and delegitimization are useful options for VEOs, especially when VEOs are deconstructed into sub-groups and the adversary's phases of operations are specifically targeted. Contemporary deterrence theorists understand the threat of use of force can be utilized in the cyber and information domains. Most importantly, the latest wave of deterrence theory understands there will be a blurring of lines between traditional definitions of deter and compel, and denial and defense. Getting the desired outcome right is more important than getting hung up on a definition.

To conceptually determine the desired outcome, an additional method presented in this thesis utilizes Fuller's framework of the physical, cognitive, and moral spheres to design deterrence outcomes. The three approaches, See my Strength, Can We Agree, and Feel the Burn, are a simple way to effectively begin the process of operationalizing deterrence in the physical, cognitive, and moral spheres. The three approaches are primarily intended for military and civilian planners as a tool to incorporate new thoughts on deterrence into strategic options. The method will be most useful after examining current strategies, like Israel's IDF Strategy and the U.S. strategy to counter ISIS.

Israel's situation is a relevant study where deterrence is a main pillar of strategy. The different applications of absolute and restrictive deterrence, as well as general and specific deterrence, are all learning points from Israel's strategy. Israel crossed a fundamental threshold in understanding its national objectives that VEOs will not be defeated with brute force alone. The objective of Israel's strategy is to lessen violence to acceptable levels,

leading to a situation where it maintains the position of advantage in the region. So, the end is not the elimination of all political violence, but simply less violence. Israel's strategic thinking highlights that the failure of deterrence does not equal a failed strategy, and in the established rules of the game sometimes the use of force is necessary for a reset. Israel conducts a reset with flexible offensive options and retaliation meant to affect the adversary's will and ability to continue fighting.

The U.S. Strategy to counter ISIS shares some aspects with Israel's strategy, but is different in many ways. Both countries acknowledge the main threat they face is not state actors, but VEOs, like ISIS, who conspire and execute political violence with growing intensity and frequency. Both countries accept the fight against VEOs will be persistent and a long campaign, where legitimacy is the most critical instrument to maintain the position of advantage. Unlike Israel's situation, the U.S. leads a global coalition to counter ISIS. Additionally, the most glaring difference in the U.S. strategy is the lack of operationalized deterrence. The overall mindset of the U.S. is offensive and preventive, designed to remove ISIS's means to fight with targeted killings of ISIS leadership, destruction of ISIS's financial capability and money reserves, and training, advising, and assisting local coalition forces to directly attack ISIS strongholds in Iraq and Syria. Although an indirect form of deterrence, U.S. actions have no effect on ISIS's risk calculus.

The U.S. strategy to counter ISIS lacks specific contemporary deterrence options and is not taking full advantage of the global coalition for perception-shaping operations. Effective operationalized deterrence and the bargain can only be successful if the three prerequisites of deterrence are met. For deterrence options to be realized, the U.S. must address the three prerequisites of deterrence: right to exist, restraint, and communication. The

prerequisites are a national-level political decision and may not have the public support required to implement. However, even at some point in the future after ISIS no longer controls Mosul and Raqqa, the prerequisites will be an important consideration for creating stability in the region of Iraq and Syria and to decrease the global level of violence from ISIS-like VEOs. For perception-shaping efforts, defeating ISIS requires advertising its tactical failures to limit efforts to radicalize and recruit followers. Every spectacular attack for which ISIS claims credit, whether perpetrated from the core in Iraq and Syria, any of its affiliates worldwide, or a radicalized homegrown terrorist, that does not have a specific retaliation against it only increases ISIS's propaganda and recruitment efforts. Like Israel, the U.S. strategy needs to establish deterrence rules of the game and decrease not only ISIS's ability to fight, but also its will to continue fighting.

APPENDIX A: ISLAMIC STATE'S HISTORY AND IDENTITY[1]

ISIS believes itself to be the true and only nation for Muslims, with religious law based in the founding fathers of Islam in the seventh century. When Abu Muhammad al-Abnani, the former ISIS spokesperson, made the announcement for the caliphate in 2014, he called it every jihadists dream. He also said it is the duty of every Muslim to pledge allegiance to the caliph and "those who fail or refuse to do so shall be deemed as apostates, and will be fought and struck down."[2] Not only does ISIS make all state boundaries invalid, but it promotes violence of all forms against anyone who does not support the caliphate.

The U.S. Congressional Research Service defines ISIS as a "transnational Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group that controls large areas of Iraq and Syria, has affiliates in several other countries, has attracted a network of global supporters, and disrupts international security with its campaigns of violence and terrorism."[3] Graeme Wood defines ISIS as "a hermit kingdom [with extreme religious beliefs] . . . rejects peace as a matter of principle; . . . hungers for genocide; . . . its religious views make it constitutionally incapable of certain types of change, even if that change might ensure its survival; and that it considers itself a harbinger of—and headline player in—the imminent end of the world." Lastly, Linda Robinson, from a 2016 RAND study assessing the counter ISIS campaign, called ISIS a "land holding proto-state, . . . hybrid threat, . . . [and] an international movement." ISIS clearly set itself apart in the world, opposed to anyone who does not adhere to its beliefs. But,

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[1] The appendix on ISIS history and identity is included in this thesis in order to provide background information to better understand the threat ISIS poses to the region and world. Most importantly, ISIS is a symptom of preconditions and precipitants that will require a long, protracted campaign to resolve.
[2] Radwan Mortada, "What Does ISIS' Declaration of a Caliphate Mean?," *Akhbar.com*, June 30, 2014, http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/20378 (accessed October 11, 2016).
[3] Congressional Research Service, *The Islamic State and U.S. Policy, June 2016* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), summary.

further examination of its origins and practices reveals there are opportunities for countering ISIS, including deterrent strategies.

The U.S. is 240 years old if one counts the day of independence on 4 July 1776. The origin story of ISIS is far less definitive, but is considered by many to be 2 years old if traced to the date in June 2014 when its leaders claimed the caliphate and established Abu Bakr al Baghdadi as the caliph, or supreme imam and leader of the world's Muslims.[4] Shortly after this announcement, Baghdadi gave a spirited public speech from the Great Mosque of al-Nuri in Mosul on 5 July and foreign fighters flocked to the cause.[5] This aforementioned birth date for ISIS (June 2014) is misleading and much can be learned from further examination of the origins of its organization and ideology.

ISIS's organization dates to the early 2000s in Jordan and Iraq with the rise in power of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. He was the leader of an organization called Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (JTJ), which carried out several damaging attacks against US and coalition forces after the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.[6] Seeking more financial backing, prestige, and attempting to align several Sunni jihadist factions under his banner, Zarqawi swore allegiance to Al Qaeda (AQ) and Osama bin Laden, and changed the name of his group to Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004.[7] Over the next two years, AQI was responsible for some spectacular attacks, namely the bombing of hotels in Aman, Jordan and the Shiite Golden Mosque in Samarra, Iraq.[8] In June 2006, U.S. airstrikes killed Zarqawi and he was succeeded

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[4] Congressional Research Service, 17.
[5] Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," *Atlantic.com*, March 2015, http//www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/ (accessed October 2, 2016).
[6] Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism, Islamic State, *Ihs.com*, August 11, 2016 (accessed October 5, 2016), 4.
[7] Daniel Byman, "ISIS Goes Global: Fight the Islamic State by Targeting Its Affiliates," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2016), 77.
[8] Congressional Research Service, 19.

by Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, sequentially the name changed from AQI to Islamic State in Iraq (ISI).[9] ISI continued its attacks in Iraq, but started to weaken with the US orchestrated Sunni awakening in the 2007 and 2008 timeframe. ISI received another blow in 2010 with the deaths of Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi.[10] They were succeeded by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who managed to keep the organization from total defeat.[11]

The US withdrew from Iraq in 2011, and at first the Iraqi government appeared to be in relative control with most jihadist groups' violence in check.[12] Over the next two years, ISI took advantage of the Iraqi government's sidelining of Sunni factions and the civil war in Syria to gain strength, and changed its name to Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham or the Levant (ISIS/ISIL) in 2013.[13] The union of forces between Iraq and Syria sparked a controversy with the leadership of groups affiliated with AQ. In early 2014, Ayman al-Zawahiri, AQ's leader, demanded the group separate with ISI remaining only in Iraq.[14] Baghdadi rejected this demand and ended his group's link to AQ. In 2014, ISIS began a series of swift attacks in Syria and Iraq that gained significant territory from Raqqa to Mosul. As mentioned previously, in June 2014 Baghdadi announced the caliphate and simplified the name to Islamic State. The rapid success of ISIS combined with a dynamic media campaign caused thousands of foreign fighters to gather in the region and swear allegiance to Baghdadi, as well as gaining the loyalty of several international jihadist groups across Africa, Afghanistan, and Yemen. The ISIS ideology grew, "eclipsed AQ in size and strength; it has

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[9] Jane's, 4.
[10] Jane's, 4.
[11] Congressional Research Service, 17.
[12] Byman, 77.
[13] Congressional Research Service, 17.
[14] Jane's, 4.

outpaced its former master in spawning affiliates, establishing ever-larger numbers of franchises and supporters throughout the Muslim world."[15]

ISIS's ideology can be traced much further back than its organizational origin (2002) and has its roots in violent jihadist Salafism, translated from Arabic to mean "pious forefathers."[16] Salafism has its origins in the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries with teachings of Ibn Taimiya and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab.[17] They believed in a pure fundamentalist form of Islam back to its "strict adherence to the Qur'an and practices of the Prophet Muhammad.[18] The radical and violent nature of Salafism can be traced to Egypt in the 1960s and the writings of Sayyid Qutb. He is one of the most prominent radical Islamists and raised the idea of jihad against Westerners, non-believers, and all secular Muslim non-practitioners of sharia.[19] Many ISIS leaders today use Qutb's writings in the approach they take towards "applying their view of Islamic religious tenets."[20] What makes ISIS different in its beliefs than AQ or other militant Islamic groups is the condemnation of Muslims, both Sunni and Shia sects, who do not swear loyalty to the caliph and join the fight for its expansion. Also different, ISIS's claim to a regional caliphate and territory exposes the group to the alignment of its legitimacy in the existence of the caliphate. In other words, maintaining the caliphate is necessary for its continued survival and power.

ISIS's ideology led to its rapid growth, but the region faces social, political, and economic problems that enabled rallying Muslims to its cause. The Atlantic Council, in a 2015 brief, said "ISIS is a symptom of much deeper ills that have plagued the Middle East

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[15] Byman, 77.
[16] Wood, 5.
[17] Philippe Migaux, "The Roots of Islamic Radicalism," In *The History of Terrorism from Antiquity to Al Qaeda* (University of California Press, 2007), 271.
[18] Seth Jones, *A Persistent Threat: The Evolution of al Qa'ida and other Salafi Jihadists*, RAND (2014), 12.
[19] Migaux, 283.
[20] Congressional Research Studies, 24.

for years, it has staying power and will not easily be wiped out."[21] In this same briefing, the Atlantic Council specifically mentions the "underlying conditions that gave birth to ISIS [are] bad economics and failed governance."[22] Tore Bjorgo highlights many "preconditions" and "precipitants" of terrorism that explain the underlying conditions of the ISIS.[23] Preconditions "set the stage" for violent extremism, but are not fully sufficient to cause the outbreak of a group like ISIS.[24] The precondition requires a precipitant, or the "specific event or situations that immediately precede, motivate, or trigger the outbreak" of a VEO.[25] Figure 3 provides a quick summary of Bjorgo's preconditions, precipitants, and factors sustaining terrorism.

Preconditions and Precipitants:
- **Lack of democracy, civil liberties, and the rule of law**
- **Failed or weak states**
- **Rapid modernization**
- **Extremist ideologies**
- **Historical antecedents of political violence, civil wars, revolutions, dictatorships or occupation**
- **Hegemony and inequality of power**
- **Illegitimate or corrupt governments**
- **Powerful external actors upholding illegitimate governments**
- **Repression by foreign occupation or by colonial powers**
- **The experience of discrimination on the basis of ethnic or religious origin**
- **Failure or unwillingness by the state to integrate dissident groups or emerging social classes**
- **The experience of social injustice**
- **The presence of charismatic ideological leaders**
- **Triggering events**

Factors Sustaining Terrorism:
- **Cycles of revenge**
- **The need of the group to provide for its members or for the survival of the group itself**
- **Profitable criminal activities**
- **No exit**

Figure 3. Tore Bjorgo's preconditions, precipitants, and factors sustaining terrorism.[26]

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[21] Bilal Y. Saab, "ISIS War Game III: The Final Phase," *Atlanticcouncil.org*, December 2015(accessed October 5, 2016), 3.
[22] Saab, 2.
[23] Tore Bjorgo, ed. *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Ways Forward* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 258.
[24] Ibid, 258.
[25] Ibid, 258.
[26] Bjorgo, 258-261.

In summary, ISIS is a relatively new VEO, but its base ideology developed in the Muslim world over centuries. Born of the power struggle between ISI and AQ over control of Iraq and Syrian Sunni jihadist groups, ISIS succeeded in dominating the region and world as the preeminent leader in violent militant Islamic extremism. In claiming the caliphate and regional territory from Raqqa to Mosul, demanding all Muslims swear allegiance to Baghdadi, and provoking the rest of the world with acts of terrorism, ISIS created some vulnerabilities to its survival. ISIS's views are not mainstream and there was a significant backlash in the Muslim world. One need only look at the Muslim coalition building against ISIS in Iraq as evidence. ISIS created enemies everywhere and pitched its legitimacy in holding the territory it controls. However, a successful strategy against ISIS needs to look beyond its immediate military defeat and towards the underlying conditions that make it attractive to radicalized Muslims worldwide. A successful strategy against ISIS will require all elements of national power, as well as threat and use of force, with a global like-minded coalition.

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CIRRICULUM VITAE

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